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Premature babies at Shifa hospital in Gaza. On 11 November, two babies died when their life support stopped working and 37 babies in incubators are said to be at imminent risk of death. Screenshot from a video by UNICEF, 16 October 2023

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Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel | Flash Update #36

11 Nov 2023

KEY POINTS

- Israeli shelling and ground attacks intensified around hospitals in Gaza city and northern Gaza (hereafter: the north) on 11 November, with several being directly hit. According to media reports, civilians, patients, and staff were shot at while attempting to flee the Shifa hospital in Gaza city.

- On 11 November, power at the Shifa and the Indonesian hospital (northern Gaza) was reportedly cut off after fuel for generators ran out; generators at Al Quds hospital (Gaza city) failed and could not be repaired due to the bombardment and fighting. At Shifa, two babies died when their life support stopped working and 37 babies in incubators are at imminent risk of death, according to the Ministry of Health in Ramallah.

- On 11 November, following reports on the attacks hitting Shifa hospital, the OCHA Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, stated: "There can be no justification for acts of war in health care facilities, leaving them with no power, food or water, and shooting at patients and civilians trying to flee."

- Hospitals are explicitly entitled to specific protection under international humanitarian law (IHL). They must not be used to shield military objectives from attack. Any military operation around or within hospitals must take steps to spare the patients, medical staff, and other civilians, who must be protected under IHL. All feasible precautions must be taken to avoid incidental civilian harm, including effective warnings, which take into account the ability of patients, medical staff and other civilians to evacuate safely.

- The flight of tens of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the north southwards through a “corridor” opened by the Israeli military, continued on 11 November.

- Hundreds of thousands of people who remain in the north are struggling to get the essentials for their survival. Consumption of water from unsafe sources raises serious concerns about dehydration and waterborne diseases.

- The reported fatality toll since 7 October includes at least 192 medical staff, according to MoH Gaza. Of them, at least 16 medical staff were on duty when killed, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Furthermore, 101 UNRWA staff have been killed, the highest number of UN personnel killed in a conflict in the history of the organization. Eighteen Palestinian Civil Defense personnel and 44 Palestinian journalists have also been killed since this crisis began.

Hostilities and casualties (Gaza Strip)

- On 11 November, clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups were reported in and around Gaza city, in several areas in the North Gaza governorate and to a lesser extent in the Middle area. Meanwhile, intense Israeli bombardments from the air, sea, and land continued across the Gaza Strip, while Palestinian armed groups continued launching projectiles toward Israel. Israeli ground troops have maintained the effective severance of the north from the south, except for the “corridor” to the south.

- On 10 November, at about 17:00, an Israeli airstrike hit Al Buraq school in Gaza city, which was being used as a shelter for IDPs, killing 50 people. The Israeli military stated that the airstrike targeted a Palestinian commander hiding in the school.

- On 11 November, following the collapse of services and communications at hospitals in the north, the MoH in Gaza did not update casualty figures. The Palestinian fatality toll in Gaza as of 10 November at 14:00 stood at 11,078, of whom 4,506 were said to be children and 3,027 women. About 2,700 others, including some 1,500 children, have been reported missing and may be trapped or dead under the rubble, awaiting rescue or recovery. Another 27,490 Palestinians have reportedly been injured.

- As of 10 November, 66 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in UNRWA shelters have been killed and 558 injured. One-third of these fatalities and most of those injured (at least 400) occurred in facilities in the south.

- In the past 24 hours, five Israeli soldiers were reportedly killed in Gaza, bringing the total number of soldiers killed since the start of ground operations to 47, according to Israeli official sources.

- See the latest snapshot for more breakdowns.

Displacement (Gaza Strip)

- On 11 November, for the eighth consecutive day, the Israeli military – which has called upon residents of the north to leave southwards – opened a “corridor” along the main traffic artery, Salah Ad Deen Road, between 9:00 and 16:00. It is estimated that tens of thousands of displaced people evacuated.

- IDPs reached the main junction next to Wadi Gaza on foot or donkey carts, given that the Israeli military reportedly stopped vehicles at about 4-5 kilometres away from that point. Most were able to carry only a few belongings. Most IDPs arrived exhausted and thirsty. UN monitors and NGOs distributed water and biscuits next to the junction.

- Over 1.5 million people in Gaza are estimated to be internally displaced. Among them, almost 760,000 IDPs are staying in at least 149 UNRWA shelters, where overcrowding is a major concern. The average number of IDPs per UNRWA shelter exceeded 6,250, which is nine times higher than their intended capacity. On average, 160 people

sheltering in UNRWA facilities share a single toilet and there is one shower unit for every 700 people. The worsening sanitary conditions, along with the lack of privacy and space, generate health and safety hazards.

- See the live IDP dashboard for the latest figures and more breakdowns.

Humanitarian Access (Gaza Strip)

- For the second consecutive day, the Egyptian border was closed for the evacuation of foreign nationals and dual citizens, and injured people. Between 2 and 9 November, 131 injured people were taken for medical care in Egypt.

- A total of 53 trucks, carrying food, medicines, health supplies, bottled water, blankets, and hygiene products crossed from Egypt into Gaza on 11 November as of 18:00. This brings the number of trucks that have entered Gaza since 21 October to 914. This is far below the quantities needed to meet the needs of over two million people besieged in Gaza.

- The Kerem Shalom crossing with Israel, which prior to the hostilities was the main entry point for goods, remains closed, as does the Israeli pedestrian crossing of Erez.

- In the International Humanitarian Conference held on 9 November in Paris, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths stated that “the modest number of trucks we have so far managed to get in via the Rafah border crossing is wholly inadequate compared to the vast sea of needs […] We need to get hundreds of trucks per day into Gaza, not dozens, and be allowed to reach every place people are sheltering.”

Electricity

- 11 November marks one month since Gaza has been under an electricity blackout, following Israel’s shutting off the electricity supply and the depletion of fuel reserves for Gaza’s sole power plant.

- The entry of fuel, which is desperately needed to operate electricity generators to run life-saving equipment, remains banned by the Israeli authorities.

Health care, including attacks (Gaza Strip)

- On 11 November, communication was cut off from hospitals in the north of Gaza. Therefore, information has been difficult to verify and there are no updates to the reported fatality toll.

- On 11 November, the Director of Shifa hospital was cited in the media as stating that there was no more food, water or electricity. A patient in the Intesive Care Unit and two incubated babies reportedly died as their life support machines shut down due to absence of electricity. It is estimated that 15,000 people are still sheltering within Shifa Hospital.

- The Israeli military has repeatedly alleged that armed groups operate a military compound within and underneath the Shifa hospital. The hospital’s management and the Palestinian MoH have strongly denied this allegation and have called for an independent investigation.

- On 11 November, it was reported that Al Quds hospital’s generator had failed, and technicians were unable to fix it due to sniper fire. Out of the most critical patients, seven are in the ICU and three babies are in incubators.

- As of 11 November, according to the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS), seven out of their eighteen ambulances in the north were still functioning, but at risk of completely ceasing operations in the coming hours due to fuel depletion.

Water and sanitation (Gaza Strip)

- As of 9 November, following a few days of limited operation, all municipal water wells across the Gaza Strip had to shut down again due to the lack of fuel. As a result, the trucking and pumping of brackish water for non-drinking domestic uses came to a halt.

- Anecdotal reports indicate that people hosted or living near the sea, are reaching the beaches to bath and wash clothes in the sea, as well as carrying seawater to their homes and shelters for domestic consumption. This practice may carry various negative health ramifications due to the high pollution levels of seawater.

- In the north, neither the water desalination plant nor the Israeli pipeline are operational. Similarly, no distribution of bottled water among IDPs accommodated in shelters has taken place for over a week. There is serious concern about dehydration and waterborne diseases following water consumption from unsafe sources.

- UNRWA has been providing about 1.5 litres of potable water and 3-4 litres of non-potable water per person per day in all shelters in the south. In the largest shelter located in Khan Younis (over 21,700 IDPs), UNRWA in partnership with UNICEF, installed a desalination plant, which turns brackish water extracted from wells, into potable water.

- Water entering from Egypt in bottles and jerry cans can only address the drinking needs (three litres per person per day) of about 4 per cent of the people.

- Transfer of solid waste to landfills has largely stopped across the Gaza Strip, due to lack of fuel and insecurity. Waste is accumulating in the streets and outside IDP shelters, creating a high risk of airborne diseases and infestation of insects and rats.

Food security

- Lack of food in the north is of increasing concern. Since 7 November, no bakeries have been active, due to the lack of fuel, water, and wheat flour, as well as the damage sustained by many. Wheat flour is reportedly no longer available in the market. Food security partners have been unable to deliver assistance in the north during the past nine days. There are indications of negative coping mechanisms due to food scarcity, including skipping or reducing meals and using unsafe and unhealthy methods for making fire. People are reportedly resorting to unconventional eating, such as consuming combinations of raw onion and uncooked eggplant.

- Access to bread in the south is also challenging. The only operative mill in Gaza remains unable to grind wheat due to a lack of electricity and fuel. Eleven bakeries have been hit and destroyed since 7 October. Only one of the bakeries contracted by WFP, along with eight other bakeries in the south, intermittently provides bread to shelters, depending on the availability of flour and fuel. People queue for long hours in front of bakeries, where they are exposed to airstrikes.

- WFP and its partners report that some essential food items such as rice, pulses, and vegetable oil are nearly depleted in the market. Other items, including wheat flour, dairy products, eggs, and mineral water, have disappeared from the shelves in shops across Gaza over the past two days. Despite limited stock at the wholesale level, these items cannot reach retailers due to extensive damage, security issues, and the lack of fuel. The prices of available food items in the market have increased by 10 per cent since the start of hostilities, according to a WFP survey.

- While about 9,000 tons of wheat grain are stored in mills in Gaza, a significant portion of it cannot be used, due to massive destruction, security concerns, and shortages of fuel and electricity.

Hostilities and casualties (Israel)

- The indiscriminate firing of rockets by Palestinian armed groups towards Israeli population centers has continued over the past 24 hours, with no reported fatalities. Overall, about 1,200 Israelis and foreign nationals have been killed in Israel, according to the Israeli authorities as cited by the media (the reported estimate has been revised by Israeli sources), the vast majority on 7 October. As of 10 November, the names of 1,162 of fatalities in Israel have been released, including 845 civilians and police officers. Of those whose ages have been provided, 33 are children.

- According to the Israeli authorities, 239 people are held captive in Gaza, including Israelis and foreign nationals. Media reports indicate that about 30 of the hostages are children. So far, four civilian hostages have been released by Hamas, and one female Israeli soldier was rescued by Israeli forces. Hamas has claimed that 57 of the hostages had been killed by Israeli airstrikes. On 9 November, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, renewed his call to release the hostages.

Violence and casualties (West Bank)

- On 11 November, Israeli forces shot and killed a Palestinian man during a search-and-arrest operation in Arraba village (Jenin).

- Since 7 October, 169 Palestinians, including 46 children, have been killed by Israeli forces; and an additional eight, including one child, have been killed by Israeli settlers in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Three Israelis have been killed in attacks by Palestinians.

- The number of Palestinians killed in the West Bank since 7 October accounts for 42 per cent of all Palestinian fatalities in the West Bank in 2023 (417). About 59 per cent of the fatalities since 7 October occurred during confrontations that followed Israeli search-and-arrest operations, primarily in Jenin and Tulkarm governorates. Some 27 per cent were in the context of demonstrations in solidarity with Gaza; seven per cent were killed in settler attacks against Palestinians, and the remaining seven per cent were killed while attacking or allegedly attacking Israeli forces or settlers.

- Since 7 October, Israeli forces have injured 2,560 Palestinians, including at least 262 children, over half of them in the context of demonstrations. Seventy Palestinians have been injured by settlers. Some 32 per cent of those injuries have been caused by live ammunition.

- Since 7 October, OCHA has recorded 235 settler attacks against Palestinians, resulting in Palestinian casualties (29 incidents), damage to Palestinian-owned property (170 incidents), or both casualties and damage to property (36 incidents). This reflects a daily average of over six incidents, compared with three since the beginning of the year. Over one-third of these incidents included threats with firearms, including shootings. In nearly half of all incidents, Israeli forces were either accompanying or actively supporting the attackers.

Displacement (West Bank)

- Since 7 October, at least 121 Palestinian households comprising 1,149 people, including 452 children, have been displaced amid settler violence and access restrictions. The displaced households are from 15 herding/Bedouin communities.

- Additionally, 45 Palestinians, including 24 children, have been displaced since 7 October following punitive demolitions, and another 135 Palestinians, including 66 children, following demolitions in Area C and East Jerusalem, due to lack of permits.

Funding

- On 7 November, the UN and its partners issued a plan that outlines the minimum necessary to scale up humanitarian operations in support of 2.2 million people in the Gaza Strip and 500,000 of the most vulnerable in the West Bank. An estimated US$1.2 billion is required to deliver existing humanitarian services amid ongoing hostilities. The UN has shared its response plan with potential donors and partners as part of an updated Flash Appeal.

- Private donations are collected through the Humanitarian Fund.

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND RESPONSES

Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)

Priority needs

- Access to basic needs and services is severely halted by the lack of resources and the security situation. IDPs outside formal shelters have extremely limited access to assistance. Those are prioritized for Emergency MPCA.

- Banks are temporarily closed, limiting access to cash. The capacities of financial service providers are severely limited and change by the hour (partners currently using PalPay).

- Depletion of stocked items to be purchased is worsening.

Response to date

- Some 27,634 households started receiving Emergency MPCA (NIS754 or $187 per household) as of 26 October. Redemption rates were reported as up to 86 per cent.

Protection

Priority needs

- An estimated 20,000 people in need of specialized mental health services, including mental health drugs, who are in precarious situations with the disruption to mental health services.

- Documentation of violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law.

- Opening roads, safe access to basic needs, medicines, mental health support, and ambulance services in the West Bank.

Response to date

- Some 3,000 IDPs have received psychosocial support and social work intervention services from UNRWA social workers and counsellors since the crisis began.

- In the West Bank, UNRWA provided psychosocial support services to 155 Palestinian workers from Gaza, in Hebron, Ramallah, and Tulkarm, and to 240 students at Nur Shams Boys' schools.

- One partner reached at least 4,000 IDPs in shelters in Gaza and provided psychological first aid and needs assessment for non-food items (NFIs) and assistive devices.

- Partners provided about 700 psychological, social, and legal consultations for gender-based violence (GBV) incidents. Furthermore, 1,144 first psychiatric medical services were provided for GBV cases.

- UNICEF is leading the mapping of orphanages and shelters which host children with a view to support the registration of unaccompanied and separated children, to facilitate identification, reunification, and alternative care options at national level (both Gaza and the West Bank).

Shelter

Priority needs

- Urgent need to provide services and basic shelter and NFI to IDPs.
- Provision of NFIs and house maintenance for people displaced in urban centres and with host families.
- Provision of shelter cash assistance for IDPs (reintegration package and belongings loss compensation) for at least 25,000 families.

Response to date

- Some 760,000 IDPs are hosted at 149 UNRWA schools across the Gaza Strip.
- Distribution of 20,000 NFIs in Rafah and Khan Younis, including bedding sets and dignity kits.
- Distribution of 820 hygiene kits to displaced families.
- ICRC and PRCS distributed 15,500 NFIs for displaced families, mainly mattresses and blankets.

Health

Priority needs

- Improve the nutritional status, particularly of about 283,000 children under five and pregnant or lactating women, in response to the concerning food security and water situation in Gaza.
- Ensuring the provision of Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies, including preventive nutrition interventions, cash voucher assistance, curative nutrition interventions, intact nutrition supplies pipeline, and a functional nutrition coordination mechanism.
- Addressing shortages of medical supplies impacting case management.
- Fuel supply for hospitals and ambulances.
- Urgent need to restock medical supplies given depletion of stocks in the local market.
- Need for short and long-term mental health and psychosocial support services for large numbers of psychologically traumatized people.
- Access to mobile clinics for 29 communities in Area C locations in Hebron, Jenin and Qalqiliya who have not had access since escalations began.

Response to date

- UNRWA continues to provide primary health-care services in the shelters, through 95 mobile medical units and medical teams.
- PMRS has eight mobile health teams also providing primary health-care services to IDPs and expects to increase the number to twelve.

- Partners are continuing to mobilize resources in Cairo; with support from WHO, the Health Cluster has deployed a logistics team based in Cairo to assist partners with health coordination.

Food Security

Priority needs

- Electricity, fuel, and water sources to maintain agriculture.
- Many shops have food supplies to last less than a week.
- Safe access to farms, livestock, fisheries, and other livelihoods.
- Urgent import of fodder.

Response to date

- On 2 November, WFP continued to assist UN shelters by distributing bread, tuna, date bars and food parcels for host communities.
- Oxfam covered 189 households in the Gaza governorate.
- Dan Church Aid (DCA) covered 18,000 households sheltering in UNRWA designated emergency shelters in the Gaza governorate.
- Islamic Relief Palestine provided food assistance to 10,000 IDPs in non-UNRWA shelters or with host families.
- Anera provides hot meals to a total of 120,000 people. Food parcels, 80 per cent to UNRWA DES shelters, 20 per cent to hosting communities and other smaller scale shelters. 2,000 households in North Gaza and 12,000 households in Khan Yunis have already been covered. Ten thousand households in the Middle Area are ongoing. Vegetable baskets to host families and small-scale shelters for 2,000 IDPs (UN shelter) in Khan Younis and 2,000 IDPs (UN shelter) in the Middle Area. Planning food parcels distributed covering 1,000 IDPs in collective shelters and host families.
- Save the Children is providing food in-kind to 75,000 IDPs outside UNRWA shelters.
- UPA in partnership with PARC is providing 617 food parcels in five different shelter schools.

Education

Priority needs

- Safe access to schools and communities.

Response to date

- Provision of emergency education supplies and learning, recreational kits/stationery to 11,250 children.
- Provision of psychosocial support to 28,300 school-aged children
- Provision of recreational activities for school-aged children.

WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene)

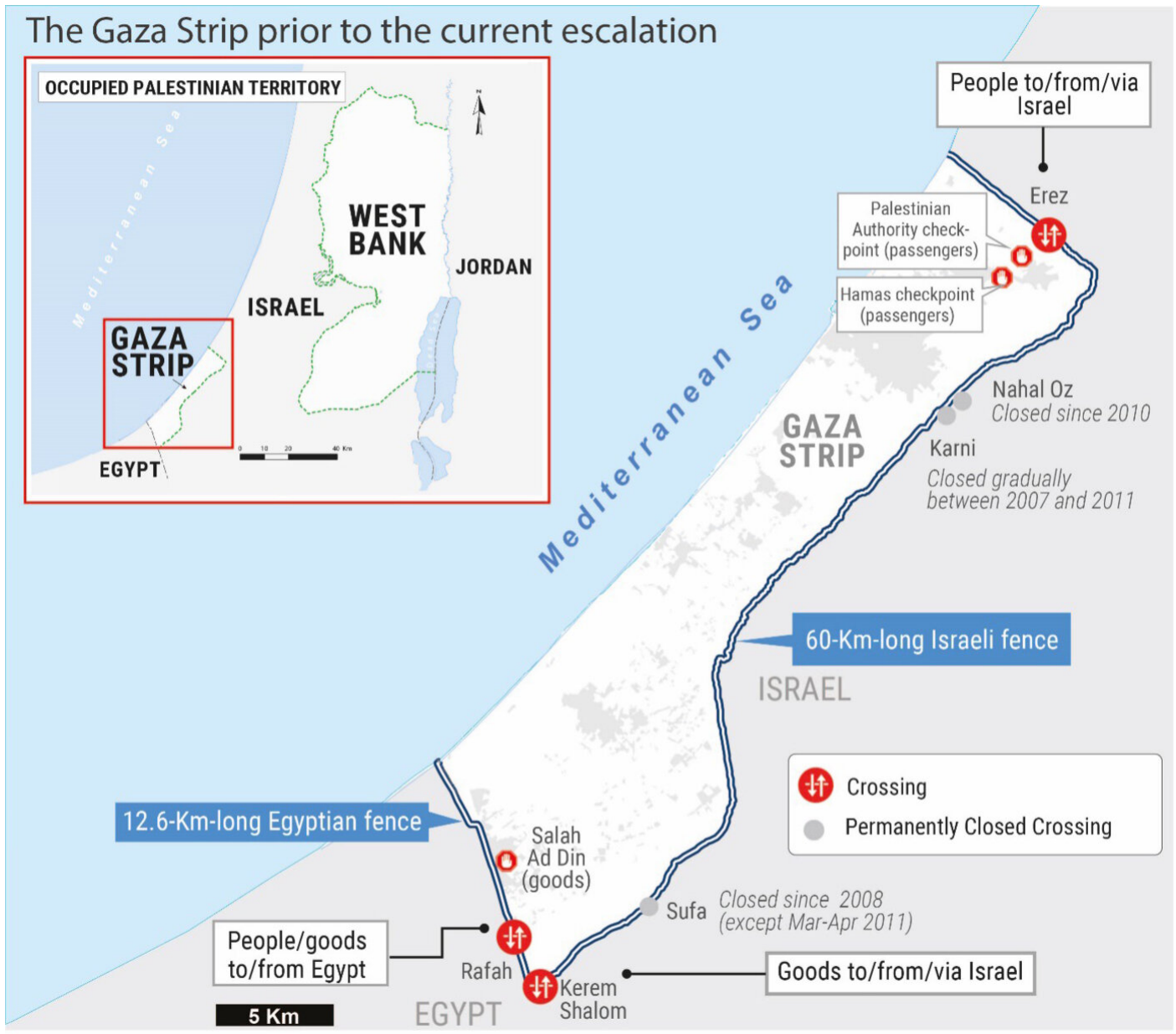
Priority needs

- Provision of clean drinking water.
- Provision of alternative power supply and 20,000 litres per day of emergency fuel to sustain the operation of WASH facilities, along with replenishing the chlorine supply for water treatment plants.
- Support to restore disrupted municipal services, including solid waste management, water, and sanitation operations, as appealed by the Gaza Strip municipalities.
- Delivery of essential WASH services and provisions to IDPs in collective centres, including drinking water and hygiene kits.

Response to date

- Since 7 October WASH partners have provided:
- Some 9,500 hygiene kits to families in the UNRWA IDP centres.
- 1,950 cubic metres of drinking water trucked to IDP centres and host families.
- 175 cubic metres of bottled water among IDPs in UNRWA shelters.
- Four water storage tanks, with a capacity of 10 cubic metres, and twenty others, with a capacity of 1.5 cubic metres each, to be used by communities and shelters.
- 8,000 units of ten litres of water capacity.
- 4,000 water purification tools for the hosted families in vulnerable communities and IDP centres.
- 211 cubic metres of fuel to WASH facilities.
- 5 cubic metres of anti-scaling to desalination plants.

Protection against sexual abuse and exploitation (PSEA) remains a cross-cutting priority for all clusters. The SAWA helpline, reachable at 121 and through WhatsApp at +972 59-4040121 (East Jerusalem at 1-800-500-121), operates 24/7. This toll-free number is widely disseminated across all areas of intervention to report cases of SEA and to facilitate emergency counseling and referrals for affected communities to access life-saving services. The PSEA Network monitors calls daily and will increase the number of counselors if necessary.


The Gaza Strip prior to the current escalation
OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY
Mediterranean Sea
WEST BANK
JORDAN
ISRAEL
GAZA STRIP
EGYPT
Mediterranean Sea
People to/from/via Israel
Erez
Palestinian Authority check-point (passengers)
Hamas checkpoint (passengers)
Nahal Oz
Closed since 2010
Karni
Closed gradually between 2007 and 2011
GAZA STRIP
60-Km-long Israeli fence
ISRAEL
Crossing
Permanently Closed Crossing
12.6-Km-long Egyptian fence
Salah Ad Din (goods)
Sufa
Closed since 2008 (except Mar-Apr 2011)
People/goods to/from Egypt
Rafah
Kerem Shalom
Goods to/from/via Israel
5 Km
EGYPT